

"THEY WHO NEVER COME BACK."

By Arch McMakin.

"Tired — tired — dead tired! James, old chap, put me to bed."

Maurice Smyth sank exhausted into the great arm chair and smiled wearily at his valet, sleepy-eyed, standing in the doorway. James crossed the floor and bent at his master's feet. Deftly he unbuckled the dainty pumps and laid them aside. The man in the chair stared vacantly at the glowing coals in the grate and sighed.

"My God!" he moaned. "Ten years!" He scrutinized the man at his feet.

"James."

"Yes, sir," the valet answered.

"Have you ever been so unhappy that you could have killed yourself?"

"Indeed I have, sir," his man answered. But he paused in his work and fumbled at the snap above his master's silken hose.

"James," Smyth queried, "have you ever been in love?"

"Yes, sir," James answered and he rose to his feet, a perfect sympathy and understanding creeping over his face.

"Sir," he said, "would it interest you to know that Miss Morrissey called this afternoon? She wanted me to make sure to tell you of her call."

"Is that all?" Smyth yawned. James' face fell in disappointment.

"James," Smyth went on, "it's not that—it's just she and the rest of them whom I want to get

away from! I'm sick—I'm tired."

"Perhaps, sir," the valet suggested, half turning to do the errand, "perhaps a glass of port will do you good?"

"No—no!" Smyth painfully sighed, "Not that. Wine! I've been wine drunk for 10 years. I'm homesick—I want to go home. I want to go home!" The voice was so soft, pathetic, so like a tired, disappointed child's voice that the valet stopped and laid a friendly hand on his master's shoulder.

"Yes, sir," he said, "I know how that is, sir."

"You wouldn't think that a man could change as I have changed in these 10 years gone. It came to me suddenly at Brices Hall tonight. I was with those Dillon girls. There was a one-act skit with a rural setting, an innocent milkmaid, a farmer boy—and darn it all, he looked just like me of 15 years ago. Then in comes an actress who was—was having a hard time getting back to the Great White Way—an awfully clever plot, a wonderful setting and that boy; he looked as I used to look."

"It would be hard to imagine such of you, sir," the valet supplied.

Smyth slipped into his lounging robe and stretched his feet to the glowing coals.

"I wish I could go back," he said, "back to the farm again. And greet old friends; and drive cows, and hunt birds' nests and make love to country girls." He stopped abruptly and sank back